

GUIDELINES FOR ISSMGE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND ISSMGE HONOUR LECTURES

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These guidelines provide a framework for the operation of Technical Committees (TCs) within the ISSMGE. They should be read in conjunction with ISSMGE statutes and by-laws. The ISSMGE has approximately 30 technical committees, each dealing with specific subject areas in the field of geotechnical engineering. Overall authority of the ISSMGE TCs is vested with the ISSMGE President and Board, with operational oversight provided by the Board level *Technical Oversight Committee* (TOC).

The mission of the TCs is to provide a forum for active participation by the individual members of the ISSMGE, and to promote the objectives, activities and results of the TCs throughout the ISSMGE membership. The TCs are a forum for discussing, developing and applying specialist geotechnical knowledge related to the behaviour of geo-materials, geotechnical engineering and engineering for society.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of a TC are to:

Objective 1

Disseminate and develop knowledge and practice within the TC's subject area to the membership of the ISSMGE.

Objective 2

Establish guidelines and technical recommendations within the TC's subject area.

Objective 3

Assist with technical programs of international and regional conferences organized by the ISSMGE.

Objective 4

Interact with industry and overlapping groups working in areas related to the TC's specialist area.

CREATION, MAINTENANCE AND DISSOLUTION OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

The topics and number of TCs are set to meet the perceived needs within the geotechnical community. The ISSMGE President, taking into account the recommendations of the TOC, may decide to maintain or dissolve existing TCs and to create new ones.

The activities of the TCs and the TC Chairs continue their work independently of the term of the ISSMGE Presidency. The TC Chair continues his/her work through the change of ISSMGE President, until otherwise directed by the President, after consultation with the TOC.

ISSMGE members, in liaison with their Member Society (MS), may also request the President and/or the TOC at any time to consider the formation of a new TC.

The ISSMGE President, after consultation with the TOC, may elect to dissolve any TC whose mandate has been fulfilled or is perceived as being inactive or ineffective.

MEMBERSHIP

All office bearers and members of TCs must be members of the ISSMGE and must remain in good standing throughout their term of service. Exceptions can be made in cases where particular expertise outside of soil mechanics and geotechnical engineering is required for continued knowledge development of a TC. Such exceptions must be approved by the TOC.

An ISSMGE member can belong to more than one TC.

TC Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary

For a new TC, based on a submitted TC proposal, the TOC nominates to the President the Chair and the host MS, in coordination with the ISSMGE Vice-President whose region the MS belongs. The MS takes responsibility for supporting the Chair and providing the necessary administration to ensure efficient operation of the TC.

The choice of a suitable Chair is crucial to the effective operation of the TC. The Chair should have sufficient knowledge of the subject area, should be well respected by the geotechnical community and the TC itself. He/she should make a firm commitment and have the necessary capacity to organize the activities of the TC.

The term of a Chair is 4 years and can be renewed. Normally, the number of terms is limited to two. At the end of the term of a Chair, the TOC nominates to the President the Chair and the host MS, in coordination with

the ISSMGE Vice-President whose region the MS belongs. The outgoing Chair may nominate to the TOC and the ISSMGE President one or more candidates to assume the TC chairmanship.

The Chair selects the Secretary for the TC. He/she may also nominate a TC Vice Chair. The Secretary and Vice Chair may be from a different MS to that of the Chair.

The TOC may suggest to the ISSMGE President to replace a Chair who is inactive. The authority to replace a TC Chair is vested only with the ISSMGE President. The President may also change the host MS. Examples of an inactive TC Chair include one who fails to: respond to queries by the ISSMGE President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary General or the TOC; demonstrate satisfactory progress; to comply with these TC guidelines; or respond within agreed timelines.

Membership

TCs are composed of:

- the Chair, the Secretary and possibly the Vice Chair;
- members appointed by the Member Societies;
- members nominated by the Chair; and
- corresponding members proposed by the Member Societies.

Each MS may appoint up to two (2) members to serve on the TCs. When a new TC is created, the Secretary General invites each Member Society to nominate them. At any time, a MS may nominate new member(s) or replace its member(s) in a given TC.

The Chair may also propose, at any time, to the President and to the TOC, to nominate ISSMGE members (exceptionally non ISSMGE members – see below) as members of the TC, independently of the nominations by the MSs. The total number of members nominated by the Chair should not exceed four (4), notwithstanding the Secretary and the Vice Chair (see above).

The Chair may also accept more than two members from a MS. These additional nominations are considered as Corresponding Members. The corresponding members may attend TC meetings but have no voting rights.

Nominations and a brief CV for members and corresponding members should be entered by the MS to the online TC database. Only nominations from MSs in good standing with the ISSMGE will be considered.

The Chair of the TC reviews the list of nominees and invites individual members to join the TC. A reasonable effort should be made to include one nominee from each MS unless the Chair regards the nominee as unsuitable.

The Chair submits the list of TC members to the ISSMGE President, Secretary General and the TOC. The President or the TOC may intervene if the selection of member(s) is regarded as inappropriate.

The Chair then sends an invitation to each TC member to confirm their availability and their willingness to join the TC. The Chair subsequently advises the Secretary General of the final composition of the TC. The process of forming the TC should generally be completed within three (3) months of the appointment of the TC Chair. The online database reflects the current composition of each of the TCs.

Considering that some of the TCs deal with multidisciplinary problems, in exceptional circumstances, the TC Chair may appoint a non-ISSMGE Member, provided he/she is an internationally-recognized expert able to contribute significantly to the TC's activities.

TC members are obligated to respond when requested to do so and to carry out delegated activities as agreed. The TC Chair may suggest to the ISSMGE President and the TOC to remove or replace TC members who are inactive. An inactive TC member is one who fails to respond within a reasonable timeframe to requests from the TC Chair, giving due consideration to extenuating circumstances.

In the case of inactive TC members, the TC Chair shall proceed as follows: (1) he/she first contacts the TC member; (2) if no response, he/she contacts the MS and the ISSMGE Vice-President for the Region, asking the MS to verify the member's status and, if necessary, to replace the member.

It is expected that all TC members liaise with their MS in order to report all appropriate information about the activities of the TC.

Involvement of Industry

The ISSMGE caters for the needs of all members of the geotechnical community. The composition of TCs should hence ensure a mix of academics, researchers and practitioners on the committee appropriate to the subject area of the TC. As a guideline, practitioner involvement should preferably exceed 25% on any TC, increasing to 50% or more in the case of TC of a mainly practical nature.

ACTIVITIES OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Terms of Reference and Task Forces

At the commencement of a new TC or at the nomination of a new Chair, the Chair submits the Terms of Reference (work plan and proposed deliverables) to the TOC for approval. The TOC consults with the ISSMGE President on the scope of work and reverts to the Chair with comments. Once approved, the Terms of Reference are circulated to the TC membership by the Chair and uploaded to the ISSMGE web site by the Secretary General.

The Terms of Reference should regularly be reviewed and updated as appropriate. The updated Terms of Reference follow the same procedure as the original one. The TOC will regularly (at least biennially) liaise with the TC Chairs to ensure that the Terms of Reference are current and they are available on the ISSMGE website.

The Terms of Reference should include activities contributing to achieving the following aims:

Objective 1

Disseminate and develop knowledge and practice within the TC's subject area to the membership of the ISSMGE:

1. Organize specialty conferences, symposiums, workshops and short courses.
2. Encourage preparation of keynote lectures, state-of-the-art lectures including new technologies, general reports for conferences organized by the International Society, regional conferences and conferences organized by Member Societies.
3. Develop ideas for broad participation of ISSMGE individual members through, for example, prediction events, surveys, or other means.

Objective 2

To establish guidelines and technical recommendations within the TC's subject area:

1. Collate available standards, codes and guidelines, and translate non-English ones into English, if necessary.
2. Prepare overviews of the standards, codes and guidelines.
3. Evaluate the similarities and the differences.
4. Make guidelines and recommendations for practice (can be procedural ones for new complex problems and/or technical ones for specific items).

Objective 3

Assist with technical programs of international and regional conferences organized by the ISSMGE:

1. Present the findings of the TC in main sessions or discussion sessions.

Objective 4

Interact with industry and overlapping organizations working in areas related to the TC's specialist area:

1. Identify overlapping organizations and decide how to interact with them.

The lifetime of a TC is not linked to the period of a Presidency. However, an incoming President will agree with a TC its Terms of Reference and work plan for their Presidential period,

The TC Chair is encouraged to develop task forces for specific activities and assign the responsibility to TC members to lead these activities. These TC members will be known as Leaders of the specific Task Forces of that TC. The Leaders of the Task Forces of a TC, together with the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary form the Executive of the TC.

The Chair is to submit a list of proposed TC meetings to the Secretary General and to the TOC through the Vice-President of the region the Chair belongs to. Although these meetings may change, it is important to notify the general membership at an early stage of potential meetings to allow for appropriate planning and coordination of ISSMGE events.

Responsibilities of TC

A TC is responsible for discussing, advancing and developing knowledge in its specialist subject area. Wherever possible, it should seek to synthesize this information into a form that is of use to the geotechnical profession and to disseminate it to the membership of the ISSMGE, as articulated in the Objectives above. There should be a balance between the advancement of academic research and the translation of appropriate research findings into practice.

Activities

TCs may use a variety of means for achieving their objectives. Typically these would include specialist discussions, symposia, academic/practitioner forums, specialty conferences, surveys, etc. Active involvement by the TC in International and Regional Conferences organized by the ISSMGE is strongly encouraged.

All conferences, symposia, etc. organized under the auspices of the TC must adhere to the principles outlined in the ISSMGE conference manual. The TC shall seek approval from the TOC, President and Secretary General before it gives official endorsement to any conference or activity organized by bodies outside the ISSMGE.

Deliverables

The Terms of Reference of the TC should include tangible deliverables such as reports, seminars and proceedings or other demonstrable outputs. Particular emphasis should be placed on coordination of research efforts and the translation of research findings into practice.

Each TC is required to submit two reports to the ISSMGE Board: an interim report in time for the mid-term Council meeting, and one administrative report 6 months prior to the International Conference for presentation at the Council meeting. Both reports are to be submitted to the TOC and the Secretary General. The format for the two administrative reports will be provided by ISSMGE.

ISSMGE HONOUR LECTURES ESTABLISHED BY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Criteria and process for creating and naming ISSMGE Honour Lectures

The establishment of a new ISSMGE Honour Lecture should normally be initiated by a TC. If a new ISSMGE Honour Lecture is proposed by a non-TC, the President is to select a TC to deal with the matter.

The TC proposing an ISSMGE Honour Lecture shall have the support of at least 75% of its members prior to submitting a proposal. In that process, the TOC shall provide advice prior to the President and the Board considering the proposal.

As part of establishing an ISSMGE Honour Lecture, a decision will be made on the frequency (yearly, biennially or at other intervals), as well as the venue for the lecture. The venue shall be within a regular conference arranged by a TC and/or the ISSMGE. The criteria for selecting the topic and title of the ISSMGE Honour Lecture shall include:

1. The topic of the ISSMGE Honour Lecture shall reside with the TC.
2. The ISSMGE Honour Lecture shall enhance dissemination of knowledge within the TC's field.
3. The title of the ISSMGE Honour Lecture may be the name of a person (or several persons) who made acknowledged and significant contributions to the topic. This person should also have played an active role in disseminating his/her works through publications and lectures. The person may or may not be living.
4. The TC should prepare a list of a total of three alternative nominees for the ISSMGE Honour Lecture. The proposed nominee shall be decided by a simple majority by the TC members. The nominees shall form part of the proposal. The final decision on all aspects of the ISSMGE Honour Lecture resides with the President.

The lifespan of an ISSMGE Honour Lecture shall be a minimum of 8 years. If extended beyond that, it shall be dealt with as a new Honour Lecture. If a TC is dissolved, the ISSMGE Honour Lecture will also cease.

Criteria and process for the selection of the ISSMGE Honour Lecturer

The TC recommends the name of the ISSMGE Honour Lecturer. In that process, the TC shall consider at least three alternative candidates. All TC members can propose candidates. The TC members shall then rank the candidates. All TC members shall have the opportunity to vote via e-mail, with a minimum 2-week election period. The selected candidate shall have the support of at least 50% of the TC members.

The Lecturer shall be a member of the ISSMGE and be recognized as a national or international expert within the field of the topic. This would normally mean that the Lecturer has published several papers, books or other publications on the topic. Alternatively, the Lecturer may have made a recent major contribution to the Topic.

The selection criteria shall not include nationality of the Lecturer, i.e. a Lecturer may come from the same country or continent as the previous Lecturer. There are no requirements to education or position. Practicing engineers and persons from the academia are equally eligible.

The TC Chair shall first inform the ISSMGE President and the TOC of the name of the selected Lecturer. If there is some disagreement with the proposed Lecturer, one or several alternative candidates should be proposed to the TC Chair. If agreement is not reached, the TC makes the final decision.

ISSMGE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING TC

The ISSMGE has established an *Outstanding TC Award* to be presented at the quadrennial International Conference. It is the responsibility of the MS, in conjunction with the regional Vice-President, to apply for the Award on behalf of the TC and to present the achievement of the TC in light of the criteria for the Award (see Awards Committee for application and award criteria).

FUNDING OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

In agreeing to host the TC, the host MS accepts responsibility for providing the necessary administrative support for the operation of the TC. Members' costs are borne by the members or their sponsoring organizations or MSs.

Under exceptional circumstances, application for funding or other resources for specific activities may be made to the MSs.

OMBUDSMAN

The TOC is the first point of contact for matters related to the ISSMGE TCs. If a MS disagrees with the decision of the TOC and wishes to appeal the case, the President will serve as the ombudsman and will be the final authority.

JOINT TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Joint Technical Committees (JTCs) are hosted by one of the Sister Societies of FedIGS. They are formed where the subject area of the TC extends into the fields of interest of several Sister Societies. The rules governing the formation and the operation of the JTCs are agreed among the Sister Societies (see FedIGS agreement).